

FDA bans BPA from baby bottles, sippy cups

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Move comes after industry request for 'clarification,' but consumer advocates say it's not enough.

(HealthDay) -- The controversial plastics chemical bisphenol A (BPA) is now banned for use in baby bottles and sippy cups, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced Tuesday.

The move was prompted by a request in October from the American Chemistry Council, which represents industry, as a way to clarify for consumers that [BPA](#) will not be found in these items.

BPA has a checkered history, with many [consumer advocate](#) groups pointing to studies suggesting the chemical might disrupt hormones and trigger a host of unhealthy changes in children and adults, including cancer, obesity and developmental/reproductive problems.

In its ruling, the FDA said that, effective Tuesday, it is now banning BPA-containing resins in "[infant feeding](#) bottles [[baby bottles](#)] and spill-

proof cups, including their closures and lids, designed to help train babies and toddlers to drink from cups [sippy cups]."

In a news release, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) applauded the move but said it still offers consumers only "limited protections."

Because BPA is found elsewhere in plastics, the FDA move "still leaves the public exposed to the hormone-disrupting chemical in food packaging," the NRDC said.

"This is only a baby step in the fight to eradicate BPA," NRDC senior scientist Dr. Sarah Janssen said in the release. "To truly protect the public, FDA needs to ban BPA from all food packaging. This half-hearted action -- taken only after consumers shifted away from BPA in children's products -- is inadequate. [The] FDA continues to dodge the bigger questions of BPA's safety."

For its part, the American Chemistry Council (ACC) defended the safety of BPA in a statement released Tuesday. "BPA is one of the most thoroughly tested chemicals in commerce today. The consensus of government agencies across the world is that BPA is safe for use in food-contact materials, including those intended for infants and toddlers."

In the statement, ACC spokesman Steven Hentges said the FDA baby bottle/sippy cup ban was necessary because "confusion about whether BPA is used in baby bottles and sippy cups had become an unnecessary distraction to consumers, legislators and state regulators."

The ACC noted that "manufacturers of baby bottles and sippy cups announced several years ago that due to consumer preference they had stopped using BPA in these products."

But according to the NRDC, the fight to eliminate BPA from all products continues.

"In March, FDA rejected NRDC's petition to ban BPA in all [food packaging](#), but the agency emphasized it was not making a final determination of BPA's safety," the group said. "Instead, it would continue to examine the ongoing research of BPA's effects on health."

In the meantime, the NRDC said, while some canned food manufacturers have voluntarily removed BPA from can linings, its use in food and beverage cans remains legal.

More information: The full FDA ruling can be found at the [U.S. Federal Register](#).

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